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ATTN: LSA Document #08-764 (Antidegradation)

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## OFFICIAL COMMENT

As a Chicago resident, I am very concerned with the water quality of Lake Michigan. For our city to be healthy, the lake itself must be healthy. I fear that we have reached a tipping point – should water quality get any worse, we will be unable to stop the lake's demise. Lake Michigan is of *vital* importance to our ecosystems, both near and far. We must act now, and act soundly, in order to prevent any further pollution from entering the lake.

Current proposed legislation has the following problems:

- Indiana's rule would trigger an antidegradation review only when a new or increased discharge would increase the level of a pollutant to the degree it poses a potentially "detrimental effect" on lake uses.
- The rule includes several unjustified exemptions, and excludes phosphorus, sediment and other key pollutants for which no thresholds exist from protective provisions – even though these pollutants are known to harm water quality.
- The rule exempts so-called "de minimis" – or low-level – new pollution discharges from a federal requirements that the pollution is a necessary byproduct of important local economic or social benefit.

The result: Using the methods proposed in the draft rule, state regulators could permit multiple new low-level discharges of a pollutant that together have a significant cumulative impact on Lake Michigan's water quality, without any evidence that the additional pollution is justified.

**Lake Michigan deserves the highest level of protection from new or increased pollution. Indiana's proposed rule must be strengthened to protect water quality as the Clean Water Act intended.**

Thank you,

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